

Hi, I'm Melanie Isaacs, and I'm on the ACARA team, reviewing the Australian Curriculum - Science.

The overall aim of the review is to improve the Australian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 10 by refining, realigning and decluttering the content of the curriculum. In particular, we're working to refine and reduce the amount of content and duplication where we can. We are also focused on improving the quality of the content descriptions and achievement standards.

We want the Australian Curriculum, Science, to be clear about what is most important for students to learn and therefore what teachers have to teach.

With Science, we looked at the latest research, key reports and international curriculum developments and talked to key academics and our professional associations.

We reviewed how other countries and education systems approach key ideas and core concepts, with particular attention to the American Next Generation Science Standards.

We investigated the latest national and international research and the frameworks for international assessments such as PISA and TIMSS.

We sought feedback from the Australian Academy of Science, the CSIRO, representatives of the Australasian Science Education Research Association and the Australian Science Teachers Association.

We also heard from teachers who shared their experience about implementing the Australian Curriculum.

We've established two new Science reference groups, one comprising teachers and the other made up of curriculum officers from across Australia. These reference groups have helped guide and inform the review.

We also had a separate reference group with primary-school expertise. They've been able to give feedback on the manageability of the curriculum, looking across all the learning areas at specific year levels or bands.

Drawing on the background research and working with the reference groups we identified some key areas where the Science curriculum could be improved.

Providing greater clarity about what students should learn.

Improving connections between the three strands.

Refining the conceptual progression within each sub-strand of Science Understanding.

Strengthening the role of modelling and argumentation in Science inquiry and providing clearer progressions between the bands.

And strengthening the connection to the sustainability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures cross-curriculum priorities.

And so we propose the following revisions to the Science curriculum.

More explicit content descriptions in Science Understanding and Science as a Human Endeavour, focused on investigation of concepts.

While the new content descriptions look longer, this added detail serves to clarify expected depth and breadth.

The Science Understanding content sequence has been revised, particularly in the biological sciences and earth and space sciences sub-strands. And we've refined and consolidated content across F to 6 to provide more opportunities to teach with greater depth and rigour.

In Science as a Human Endeavour we've revised the nature of the Science sub-strand to align student experiences of Science with the actual work of scientists.

We've renamed and refocused the Science Inquiry strand and there is a clearer alignment to Mathematics and Technologies. Within this strand, we've included an explicit acknowledgement of the need for intercultural science inquiry practices such as seeking permission to enter Country or Place when conducting fieldwork.

There are also more detailed elaborations and new inquiry questions developed with the aim of describing optional ways of approaching the content and making connections within Science as well as across the curriculum.

We have created a What's Changed and Why document. This document gives you more detail about all the revisions we have proposed for the Science curriculum. Take the time to have a look at this document.

So, now, we're looking to hear from you. This is a simple three-step process - read the consultation curriculum, familiarise yourself with the survey, and, finally, complete the survey.

It's really important we hear your views. We want to hear all your feedback, positive and negative. Your responses will help shape an Australian curriculum for the next generation of children.

To give your feedback, simply complete the survey.

Thank you.